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ABSTRACT

The Nebraska Opportunities for Volunteers in ACTION (NOVA) was an experiment at the University of Nebraska aimed at welding traditional academic instruction and year-long community service experience into an educational alternative for undergraduates. It was initiated on July 1, 1971 as the first University Year for ACTION (UYA) program in the nation. It was also the first to be discontinued on June 30, 1974. The experience of the University of Nebraska with NOVA, both concept and program, has been mixed. This report gives examples of the problems that were faced in the design, funding, management, and operation of the NOVA program. (Author/KE)

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NOVA

An Experiment in Alternative Education for University Undergraduates

at the

University of Nebraska

Edgar A. Kelley

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The University of Nebraska
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Preface

NOVA, an acronym for Nebraska Opportunities for Volunteers in ACTION, was initiated on July 1, 1971 as the first University Year for ACTION (UYA) program in the nation. NOVA was also the first UYA program to be discontinued; operations ceased on June 30, 1974.

NOVA was an experiment at the University of Nebraska aimed at welding traditional academic instruction and year-long community service experience into an educational alternative for undergraduates. Throughout its existence, volunteers were faced with the need to be both students and facilitators of community service and development. Most succeeded in achieving this difficult synthesis of priorities.

As a NOVA supervisor during the first year of NOVA's operation, and as Director of NOVA during its last two years, I have the distinction of being the only individual who served with NOVA throughout its lifetime. It was an unparalleled experience.

This report is the valedictory for NOVA. The report prepared by Gene Harding in April, 1974, *NOVA: A Community Service/Education Experiment at the University of Nebraska*, should be read as a companion study to this report. While NOVA has ended, the effects achieved by the program remain. So do the problems and challenges of providing alternative educational experiences which are appropriate to the needs of students, supportive of the needs of citizens, and congruent with the mission of a land-grant university.

The experience of the University of Nebraska with NOVA—both concept and program—has been mixed. The concept of providing alternative education for undergraduates has been undoubtedly enhanced by both the operation of NOVA and by the successes experienced by the 141 NOVA volunteers.

This report is organized chronologically. Descriptions are also provided of the long range changes stimulated by NOVA which will carry forward, at the Univeristy of Nebraska, the concepts of NOVA.

It is recognized that this report might be viewed as being negative in tone; no such intention was present in its preparation. Instead, the objective of this report was to provide a factual description of the forces which impinged upon NOVA throughout its operation. To counteract any possible impressions of negativism, the reader should keep in mind the following findings which are based on data collected in the spring of 1974:

1. Students who were NOVA volunteers found their NOVA experience to be as valuable as, or more valuable than, university courses completed on campus.
2. Students who served as volunteers and then returned to campus for completion of additional university classes improved in academic performance as measured by academic grade point averages achieved.
3. Student and agency attitudes and ratings of program outcomes did not differ significantly when differing placement periods were compared with one another, i.e., in its impact on volunteers and agencies, NOVA consistently achieved high positive ratings.
4. Agencies generally rated volunteers which had been placed with them as having made significant and valuable contributions to the task of the agencies and to the citizens of Nebraska.
5. Faculty perceptions of the NOVA program and concept were, at the termination of the program, positive. Perceptions did not differ significantly when comparisons were made between colleges, on the basis of academic rank or experience, or on the basis of comparisons by age of the faculty members.

This report is cluttered with examples of the problems which were faced in the design, funding, management, and operation of the NOVA program. These were real problems and their recital may leave an unintended impression of negativism. In my personal opinion, the problems identified occurred in spite of the good intentions of individuals, com-

munity agencies, the University of Nebraska, and University Year for ACTION. Roads paved with good intentions sometimes reach destinations which differ in scope or quality from those which were being sought when the road is first designed. Such is the case with NOVA. In this vein, the termination of UYA funding for the NOVA program can be viewed as a "no-fault" divorce—the same goals are being sought by both University Year for ACTION and the University of Nebraska but a continued marriage of efforts at implementation of alternatives for undergraduate education is no longer feasible for the reasons indicated in this report.

EDGAR A. KELLEY
June, 1974

NOVA: IN THE BEGINNING

. . . College youth are increasingly restless, most of them anxious–indeed eager–to combine their educational attainments and experiences with service to their fellow man. . .

This statement, taken from a document submitted by the University of Nebraska to ACTION on June 1, 1971 reflects a major part of the rationale which led to the creation of UYA and of the NOVA program. Three years later, however, a survey of faculty members at the University of Nebraska showed that faculty members felt there had been a marked decline in the forms of student activism which had characterized the 1960's.

When President Richard M. Nixon visited Lincoln on January 14, 1971, he acclaimed the UNL football team as being the national collegiate champions for the 1970 season. He also announced that all federal volunteer programs, e.g., VISTA and Peace Corps and seven others, were being merged into a new agency, ACTION. University of Nebraska Chancellor D. B. Varner suggested that a new program could combine community service with academic credit in institutions of higher education. President Nixon agreed and the concept of NOVA was born. As planning proceeded in early 1971, the NOVA concept was incorporated into the development of University Year for ACTION, the new program developed to mark the inauguation of ACTION as the coordinating agency for federal volunteer programs.

The Impossible Dream

When initial planning of the NOVA program began, there were a number of expectations which later proved to be unrealistic. These dreams remained as chronic problem areas throughout the existence of NOVA. Gene Harding, UNL

Campus Director of NOVA during 1971–1972, has described these fully in his report, *NOVA: A Community Service/Education Experiment at the University of Nebraska* (April, 1974). Some major examples include:

1. *In the early stages of planning, both university and federal officials suggested that 200 or more volunteers might be recruited and placed during the first year of operation at the University of Nebraska.*

   Student interest at aniticipated levels never materialized. A total of 88 volunteers were recruited and placed during the first year of operation. Between January, 1973 and the termination of the program, an additional 53 volunteers were recruited and placed.

2. *The levels of faculty involvement and staffing originally planned were never achieved.*

   Early proposals to ACTION suggested that one full-time faculty member be employed for the supervision of every ten volunteers placed. Although ten faculty members were assigned NOVA supervision duties on a part time basis on the UNL campus during 1971–1972, their combined supervisory time was equal to less than two fulltime staff members for supervisory purposes. A similar ratio of faculty staffing also prevailed on the UNO campus.

3. *Funds–from federal or university sources–were considered imperative for the support of research and development of the NOVA concept and program.*

   Although $13,71[illegible] was received as a planning grant covering the period of July 1, 1971 until the placement of volunteers in late August, 1971, no permanent allocation of funds was made available for research and for program development. During 1973, a part time staff member was employed for project record keeping and for assessment efforts required by the revised UYA program guidelines.

4. *Adequate university control over the selection and placement of volunteers was, on occasion, hampered by federal involvement in acceptance or rejection of volunteers already approved by the university.*

The expectation which university faculty members involved in NOVA during 1971–1972 had was that their judgement as to which students should be selected and placed would be accepted by federal officials. One of the UYA program requirements, however, was that all students accepted by the university for placement as NOVA volunteers also needed to be screened by the Office of Citizen Placement. This "screening" occurred on the basis of application forms and paper records. The threatened and actual rejection of NOVA applicants by OCP, after these same applicants had already been approved at the university level, was a continuing concern.

5. *The placement of part-time volunteers, other than those directly supported by ACTION monies, as a demonstration of university commitment to the NOVA concept, was achieved–at best–in a haphazard and unsupported manner.*

   Efforts, congruent with instructional programs already underway, were made on all three campuses during the 1971–1972 project period. These efforts, to the extent that they were combined with the NOVA program, further taxed the limited supervisory staff resources which were available during the operation of the NOVA program. Other efforts made during 1973–1974, notably those on the UNL campus, are described in the section on results and institutionalization which appears later in this booklet.

NOVA: 1971–1972

Gene Harding in his report of April, 1974 has provided a thorough and admirable description of the NOVA program during its first year of operation. While many of the dreams did not materialize to anticipated levels, a number of specific operational problems did impact upon the operation of NOVA during 1971–1972. These included such items as:

1. *The lack of clear and consistent lines of authority and communication between university NOVA officials and UYA officials at the regional and national levels in Kansas City and Washington, D. C.*

   Since ACTION and UYA were both new adminis-

trative structures within the federal structure, memoranda and guidelines which were issued regarding program operation were often hasty, conflicting as to directions given, *ex post facto*, or a combination of all three.

2. *Opposition to the NOVA concept within the university community.*

The final planning of the implementation of NOVA in August, 1971 was completed during the summer months when many faculty were not on duty. Although concerns and opposition were tentatively voiced during the summer of 1971, faculty concern over program design and operation surfaced in detail during the 1971–1972 academic year. Some faculty members were concerned over the possibility that the NOVA concept represented a weakening of "the traditional purposes of faculty members, for a variety of motivating factors, instruction of students in the body of knowledge constituting a discipline of study." A greater number of faculty members, for a variety of motiviating factors, favored the NOVA concept on a theoretical level; in practice, however, these same faculty members felt that their own particular courses were "too important" for a student to be able to complete requirements without regular attendance in the university classroom. A smaller number of faculty members who favored the NOVA concept in theory and were willing to attempt its application for students enrolled in their courses or disciplines were nonetheless deeply concerned over their own ability to provide the necessary skills and time required if students were to have alternative forms of instruction.

A classic example of the types of illogical arguments which were forwarded included the statement made by one professor that "students cannot learn about municipal government simply by working in a branch of city government; they must take a course on campus."

As Harding pointed out in his report, faculty members assigned to work with the NOVA program during 1971–1972 were often selected at the last minute or on the basis of availability. While the faculty worked diligently to conduct and forward the NOVA concept, even

NOVA faculty were not always supportive of the program or the concept. In some instances, departments offered courses or faculty members served as NOVA staff out of a personal judgement that "university administration" was coercing their involvement.

3. *Opposition to the operation of NOVA by legitimate and self-styled community groups.*

Many individuals and organizations expressed concerns over the operation of NOVA and over the selection and placement of volunteers. These problems, discussed at length in the Harding Report, were often legitimate, e.g., the concern of the New Congress for Community Development, a Chicano organization in western Nebraska, over the issue of outstate placement of volunteers. Other concerns seemed to be more motivated by fear about the possible positive and negative results which might accrue from NOVA. Yet another group of concerns were those which seemed to be rooted in concerns over power; some of these concerns were related to the "money myth."

4. *Early publicity about the program initiated a belief that NOVA would provide an almost unlimited infusion of federal funds for use by the university and by community groups.*

Inflated expectations, e.g., the number of volunteers which could be recruited and placed as well as the anticipated supervisory ratio of one faculty member for every ten students, caused some university personnel to believe that NOVA had huge financial resources. The fact the volunteers were being paid a stipend added to this belief. In some cases, community agencies were under the mistaken impression that NOVA would provide personnel in the form of volunteers and, additionally, would also provide funds for use by the agency. A major set of problems resulted from the difficulty shared by many persons both within and external to the university community over the nature of "paper money." Budget figures which were stated or released were viewed as disbursable cash; university in-kind contributions—office space and equipment; value of instructional personnel time spent on special instruction

on NOVA volunteers; and, standard university overhead—treated as value added to the program and expressed in dollar amounts—were not understood.

5. *The problem of intra-university and inter-campus communication, cooperation, and coordination.*

   The original administrative plan provided for a director at the systems level, and a campus director for each of the three campus programs. While the intent was good, the effect was chaotic and impractical. UYA officials facing their own internal confusion, were further confused regarding which administrative figure was to be contacted. Information processing was often delayed so that all levels could be informed and so that decisions could be reached. On some occasions, unilateral decisions or announcements were made which then needed to be retracted or modified. On other occasions, the natural rivalries and jealousies beteen campuses led to confusion.

By January, 1972, the decision had been reached that NOVA would be operated, effective July 1, 1972, as a single program at the University of Nebraska. This change, it was felt, would reduce the necessary expenditures for administrative personnel; would provide for improved coordination at the university level; and, would provide a single spokesman for communication and negotiation with the UYA offices in Kansas City and Washington, D.C. In April, 1972, Theodore Ernst, Director of the Graduate School of Social Work, was selected as the Director of NOVA. His appointment was effective July, 1, 1972.

The change in administrative structure of the NOVA program, the departure of many of the NOVA faculty from active participation during the summer months, and confusion over new UYA guidelines for preparation of project proposals combined to create new levels of confusion about the status of NOVA. An additional source of confusion was the question of which campuses should be involved in NOVA; this confusion stemmed from a letter received from Jerry Brady, the ACTION official with primary responsibility for UYA programs; pertinent comments were:

As you know the evaluation of Phase I UYA schools is

now in progress. Complete results are now in on four programs, including the University of Nebraska.

. . . Briefly the University of Nebraska has simultaneously appeared at the top of the numerical scale with Lincoln in the high 70's and at the bottom with Omaha in the low 100's. In the Program Manager's assessment of 12 schools, rated on 6 program points, Omaha came out last and Lincoln near the top. The VISTA evaluation of 4 programs shows Lincoln first and Omaha last. The Medical School was not formally evaluated but there seems to be very little practical value in continuing a program there, since no one's expectations have been met. There have been 3 Volunteers during the first quarter and there are now only two active Volunteers.

Clearly the results of our evaluation seem to point in the direction of continuing only with the Lincoln NOVA, providing funds are available, and concentrating any expansion of UYA at that campus. I had not wanted to make this judgment earlier hoping our impressions would be disproved but such is not the case.

This message left the question of UYA approval of a 1972–1973 proposal including UNO, UNMC, or both in considerable doubt. Within the university, UNMC was reconsidering its own interest in continuing its involvment in NOVA; UNO was concerned and wanted to continue in the NOVA program; and, UNL was equally committed to continuing its involvement.

Preliminary planning for 1972–1973 resulted in a tentative decision that the proposal which would be forwarded to UYA would contain four broad program thrusts: (1) a program thrust aimed at community service and at a criminal justice project would be prepared by the School of Public Affairs and Community Service at UNO; (2) a program thrust aimed at rural health services would be prepared at UNMC; (3) a community service project would be prepared by the School of Social Work at UNL; and (4) Teachers College and the College of Home Economics, working cooperatively, would prepare a program thrust aimed at improving educational opportunities for low-income groups in Lincoln and in outstate Nebraska.

UYA guidelines for the preparation of proposals had been revised and new guidelines required that each proposed job

placement be carefully specified within a format which was called Planned Impact Programming (PIP). Discussions between Ted Ernst and UYA officials in Kansas City in late July, 1972 resulted in the notification from UYA that only the proposal prepared cooperatively by Teachers College and the College of Home Economics at UNL approximated the format required. This was the same condition which prevailed in late August, 1972 when volunteers scheduled for training and placement arrived on campus.

Sixteen volunteers had been recruited by the Teachers College/College of Home Economics component of the NOVA program. These volunteers were entered into training according to the timetable which had been established for the placement of volunteers for Fall, 1972. During the second week of training, while these sixteen volunteers were in on-the-job locations for on-site training, the announcement was made that UYA funds for NOVA would not be available for Fall, 1972 placements since the complete proposal had not been prepared, negotiated, and accepted by UYA. This unexpected announcement jolted the sixteen volunteers scheduled for placement and the faculty members which had been involved in the recruitment, selection, training, and placement of these volunteers. Similar shock waves were experienced by the agencies where these volunteers had already been placed. The resulting confusion and concern over the apparently abrupt termination of the NOVA program resulted in feature stories which appeared in newspapers throughout Nebraska.

The sixteen volunteers scheduled for placement were recalled to campus. Eight volunteers which had been funded and placed in January, 1973 remained in their volunteer placements. It appeared, however, that NOVA would end with the completion by the eight remaining volunteers of their year of service in December, 1972.

The announcement that NOVA would not be funded for Fall, 1972 was released on September 5, 1972. Within the next few days, Theodore Ernst resigned as NOVA Director. On September 15, 1972, Edgar Kelley, Assistant Professor of Secondary Education and Educational Administration, was named as NOVA Director. He remained in this position until the program was terminated on June 30, 1974.

NOVA: A SECOND CHANCE

. . . I have been an early and enthusiastic supporter of the NOVA concept. I am convinced that we will do the University of Nebraska a disservice if we allow ourselves to try to implement a delicate experimental program that is unclearly directed from Washington and inadequately funded. We simply have too may other claims on our time and limited administrative and faculty resources to permit the luxury of an ill-conceived venture. . .

This prophetic message appeared in a memorandum sent to Vice-President Robert Ross, Director of NOVA from July 1, 1971 to June 30, 1972, by UNL Vice-Chancellor Peter Magrath. This memorandum, sent in August, 1971 when details had still not been finalized for the placement of the first group of volunteers, encapsulates the problems experienced by NOVA during 1971–1972. The same problems continued to haunt the operation of the program during its last two years of operation.

The failure to attain funding for the placement of volunteers in the fall of 1972, and the subsequent problems involved in the recalling of the sixteen volunteers which had been placed before definite notification had been received regarding funding, raised a number of questions about whether or not an attempt should be made to revive the program. UYA officials at the Kansas City regional office and from the federal offices in Washington, D.C. stressed the fact that the decision to withhold funding for Fall, 1972 was based solely on the issue that a completed proposal had not been negotiated and approved prior to the start of the fall semester at the University of Nebraska. They also indicated that, if a completed proposal could be prepared, negotiated, and accepted by October 10, 1972, every effort would be made to provide the funding necessary for the placement of a new group of NOVA volunteers in January, 1973, when the spring semester at the University of Nebraska began. In considering whether or not to

prepare, submit, and negotiate a proposal for the placement of volunteers in January, 1973, university officials considered many questions. Major concerns revolved around the following points:

1. *Which campuses would be included?*

   One of the first decisions which was agreed to by all interested parties at the University of Nebraska was that any or all of the three campuses must be able, at the option of the campus, to be involved in any proposal which would be submitted to UYA. After extended discussion, UNMC decided to withdraw from further participation. The School of Social Work on the UNL campus also decided to withdraw from participation. Of the four components which had been tentatively planned for fall, 1972, this left the School of Public Affairs and Community Service project at UNO and the Teachers College/College of Home Economics project at UNL as planning groups aiming at a January, 1973 proposal and placement of volunteers. It was agreed that any proposal, if it were to be acceptable to the university, would need to provide for the planned program thrusts of these two components. Since UYA officials had suggested that any program thrusts at UNO be dropped, this decision was discussed with UYA officials before the planning and writing of a proposal for January, 1973 proceeded. UYA officials agreed to the continuation of program thrusts at UNO contingent on the revision and clarification of the NOVA administrative structure.

2. *How would the NOVA program be organized and administered?*

   The 1971–1972 NOVA adminstrative plan had provided for a Director and for three campus directors, one at each participating campus. One of the mandates which UYA had insisted upon for the preparation of a January, 1973 proposal was that a single individual be designated as the administrative head of the NOVA program. After consideration discussion by the deans of the three college planning to be involved, the vice-chancellors for academic affairs from UNO and UNL,

and the NOVA staff, Dr. Edgar Kelley was designated to continue in the role to which he had been appointed on an interim basis in September, 1972. Internally, the NOVA Director was made responsible to the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs of the campus where the director was a staff member. Since Dr. Kelley was from the UNL campus, his university accountability was to Dr. Virginia Y. Trotter, UNL Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

3. *Could sufficient volunteers be recruited so that a program could be planned which would obtain adequate federal support from UYA so that the program would be feasible?*

   One concern which was paramount, while consideration was being given to organizational questions about campus involvement and program administration, was whether or not a sufficient number of volunteers could be recruited for placement in January, 1973. A related question was whether a sufficient number of appropriate job placements could be identified for the volunteers recruited. The problems which had occurred in the fall of 1972, coupled with a gradual but apparent decline in student interest, made these issues ones for which considerable uncertainty existed. Preliminary planning in late September indicated that a high probability existed that an acceptable proposal could be prepared within UYA guidelines and that such a proposal would attract a sufficient number of volunteers and placement locations so that continuation of NOVA would be administratively and programmatically sound.

Other temporary issues plagued the planning of the proposal for January, 1973. Community representatives in Omaha were concerned over the proposed numbers of volunteers to be placed from UNO as compared with the projected number to be recruited and placed at UNL; another concern of this group was the distribution of federal funds obtained by any additional grant and the question of program direction and administration. A series of meetings involving the director and NOVA staff from UNO resulted in an uneasy truce and tentative support for the proposal being planned.

Internal questions regarding program design, involvement

of campuses, and program administration cut deeply into the time available for preparation of a proposal. A request to UYA to permit an extension of ten days—from October 10, 1972 to October 20, 1972—for preparation and submission of a proposal was approved.

UYA guidelines which had established maximum levels on a per-volunteer basis for program funding caused further consternation. The Jaunary, 1973 proposal was restricted to a figure which was $745 lower per volunteer placed than the figure which had been received for the 1971–1972 operation of NOVA. Revision of program thrust, revision of the administrative structure, and a series of lesser economies made it possible for the January, 1973 proposal to be prepared within UYA guidelines while not requiring increased cash outlays by the University of Nebraska.

NOVA: January, 1973 to June, 1974

NOVA placed 39 volunteers in January, 1973, and an additional 14 volunteers in early June, 1973. Volunteers placed in June, 1973, were funded by UYA at a level $500 less per volunteer than those placed in January, 1973. The additional volunteers placed in June, 1973 could not have been supported by the UYA level of funding were it not for the fact that no additional staff were added to provide for program supervision.

The NOVA program, as it operated during the last half of its lifetime, was both similar to, and different from, NOVA during the first year and one-half of existence. Major similarities were: (1) the assignment of each volunteer to an identified supervisor; (2) the organization of a three-week introductory training session similar in content; (3) the requirement that NOVA volunteers file regular reports on their activities in their field placements; (4) the use of a learning contract approach for the arrangement of academic courses to be taken by NOVA volunteer *in absentia*; and (5) the use of regular on-campus seminars for the continued training and followup activities required for supervision of the volunteers. Major differences included regular staff meetings involving NOVA faculty from both campuses involved in the program instead of campus staff meetings; the planning and conduct-

ing of total program training sessions instead of separate campus training sessions; and, the use of regular reporting forms which converted information into numerical data for improved ease in reporting NOVA activities and accomplishments.

Some problems of 1972 were lessened or eliminated. These problems were discussed in the first chapter of this report. Two major problems continued to create difficulty. Although a combined program had been inititated, various symptoms of intercampus rivalry occasionally appeared; most of these were related to the continuation of the "money myth." The major problem was that of finding adequate financial support for NOVA while facing the continuation of the erroneous belief that large amounts of funding were available for the operation of the program. The persistence of this "money myth" impacted more than any other factor in the eventual decision to not seek funding for the placement of additional volunteers in January, 1974.

The Decision to Terminate NOVA

By early spring of 1973, many of the operational problems which had hampered the 1971–1972 proram had been eliminated or brought under control, e.g., program records were centralized and required forms and records were delivered on time to UYA, communication between UYA and the university program was excellent and pleasant, and preplanning for January, 1974 was already underway. When placements were made in June, 1973, NOVA undertook the total operation of the program including the administration of volunteer payments which had been previously handled by the Federal Regional Finance Center in Indianapolis. This localization of volunteer stipend payments represented increased NOVA responsiveness to volunteer needs.

Two concerns were being considered by the NOVA staff during the spring and summer of 1973. The reduction of per volunteer UYA funding by $500 for the June, 1973 placements as contrasted to the January, 1973 placements meant that planning for January, 1974 would need to include identification of other sources of funds or further budgetary belt-tightening. A second concern was the continuing decline in active student interest in the type of volunteering which could be provided within the NOVA program; this decline was tied to both the categories of possible job placements and to the one-year length of commitment required of NOVA volunteers.

In August, 1973, NOVA received word from UYA officials that plans for January, 1974 would need to be based on a per-volunteer budgetary commitment which would be another $1,000 lower than that which had been received for placements made in June, 1973. A number of alternatives were suggested by UYA for possible ways in which programs such as NOVA could be maintained at existing levels of financial operation; these suggestions included:

1. *Increased support from the university.*

While support continued to be voiced for the concept of NOVA, little interest was shown at either UNL or UNO in devoting already limited college or departmental funds to support of NOVA. At UNO, where the level of financial support for the NOVA program had been a continuing source of concern and occasional frustration, little interest was shown in continuing to participate in NOVA when yet another budget cut was imminent. Greater enthusiasm was shown at UNL for continuation of the program, if at all possible; this enthusiasm, however, was not supported by identification of how the necessary funds would be available for university contributions to the continuation of NOVA.

2. *Cost-sharing by agencies where volunteers were to be placed.*

Pre-planning for January, 1974 had already considered the $500 reduction in per-volunteer costs which had been absorbed between January and June of 1973. Agencies planning to utilize volunteers placed in January, 1974 had already been contacted and asked to provide either cash or in kind contributions equal to an average of $600. Many had responded affirmatively to this request—a measure of agency interest in, and support of, the NOVA concept. From available information, however, it did not appear that the agencies would be able to locate and provide an additional $900 to $1,000 per volunteer. With notification arriving in August, 1973, many agencies were already locked into fixed budgets for fiscal year 1974 and, even if they would have been willing to do so, would have been unable to plan additional support effective in January, 1974.

3. *Reduction or elimination of stipends paid to volunteers.*

From the start of the NOVA program, volunteers had received a stipend of $190 per month. In addition, each volunteer received, upon termination from NOVA, a $50 end-of-service stipend for each month served. This meant that volunteer stipends totaled $240 per month or $2,880 for completion of a full year of service. The NOVA financial obligation on a per-

volunteer basis for each annual budget period was equal to $2,880 plus 5.85% for social security ($168.48). Thus, in budgeting for volunteer stipends, a total of $3,048.48 was required to maintain the stipend level. Volunteers also received federal health and insurance benefits. Based on the NOVA program experience, the monthly stipends were considered to be adequate but minimal; reduction or elimination of stipends was not considered to be a feasible approach to the reduction of budget.

4. *Identification of sources of support from other funding agencies.*

This approach, while possibly of use, could not have been implemented in time so that budgets for January, 1974 could have been guaranteed at an adequate level for program operation.

When the budget realities over the lifetime of NOVA were identified, and when a projection of future levels of UYA funding was anticipated, the grim truth was that NOVA, as it had operated, was no longer a feasible program for the University of Nebraska. The data below summarize the situation:

	August, 1971	January, 1973	June, 1973	January, 1974
UYA Level of Per Volunteer Support	$5,245	$4,500	$4,000	$3,000
Volunteer Stipend and Social Security	3,048	3,048	3,048	3,048
Program Operation Costs from UYA Funds	2,197	1,452	952	−48

As university personnel considered the issue of whether or not additional UYA funding should be sought for January, 1974, all involved were convinced that NOVA had been a productive and worthwhile program for UNL. Yet, the reality of insufficient sources of funding became the primary factor in the decision to terminate NOVA. Other adverse considerations were:

1. UNO had decided, in mid-September, to not continue in the NOVA program.
2. At UNL, continuation of the program would have resulted in an anticipated volunteer placement of only

25–30. This figure would be close to the minimal number of volunteers which UYA requires for program operation.

3. At UNL, direct and indirect results had occurred which could be attributed to the presence of the NOVA program during the period of 1971–1974. A strong question needed to be posed as to whether additional significant benefits could be obtained if the program were to be operated for another year or two; we already knew that NOVA could not be continued later than June, 1976.

The decision in November, 1973, to terminate NOVA as a UYA program when those volunteers who had been placed in June, 1973 completed their year of service in June, 1974 was not an easy decision. A legitimate concern was whether or not community agencies might feel that NOVA—or the university—had "let them down." When the decision was made and communicated to UYA officials, it was made by people who had been, in the words of Peter Magrath which were used to open this chapter, "early and enthusiastic supporters of the NOVA concept." It was the considered judgement of these individuals, however, that "We simply have too many other claims on our time and limited administrative and faculty resources to permit the luxury. . ."

Although NOVA, the federally-funded program, has been terminated, the concept and the results which were achieved remain. In that sense, NOVA lives!

NOVA: RESULTS AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION

I am still searching for answers to questions learned from my NOVA experience. I am thankful for having been shown the questions. I don't know if everyone goes through a jolt in life, but I know I have and it was NOVA.

This quotation from a NOVA volunteer most succinctly describes both the nature and the results of the NOVA program. The statement is probably equally valid for volunteers, for agency personnel who worked with volunteers, and for those university faculty members who became actively involved with the NOVA program—as members of the NOVA staff or as the advisors and instructors of students who served as volunteers.

Basic Data About NOVA

Between August, 1971 and June, 1974, a total of 141 volunteers were selected and placed as official NOVA volunteers. These 141 individuals provided a total of 1,362 months of fulltime service to the citizens of Nebraska. This service was without direct cost to the citizens of the state or to the agencies where the volunteers were placed. The estimated value of each month of service has been placed at $500; this figure was arrived at by considering the estimated value given to the volunteers' services by both volunteers and the agencies where they were placed. The total estimated value of the services provided by NOVA volunteers to the citizens of Nebraska is $681,000. Stipends paid to volunteers, including the operational costs for social security, totaled approximately $346,000. Operational costs for the staffing of NOVA; the transporation of NOVA staff and volunteers; and, other related costs, was approximately $258,000 in direct costs. The value of the services provided by NOVA volunteers was approximately $77,000 greater than the direct costs of providing those services.

Seventy-nine volunteers were placed from the UNL campus: 32 were placed in August, 1971; 11 were placed in January, 1972; 23 were placed in January, 1973; and, 13 were placed in June, 1973. These 79 volunteers provided 833 months of service, a figure equal to 61.2% of the total services provided by NOVA volunteers. The estimated value of services provided by students from the UNL campus to citizens of the state is approximately $416,500. Volunteers placed from the Lincoln campus provided 416 months of service to outstate Nebraska; the other 417 months of services were provided to agencies in Lincoln and Omaha.

A total of 57 volunteers were placed from the UNO campus. 32 were placed in August, 1971; 8 were placed in January, 1972; 16 were placed in January, 1973; and, 1 was placed in June, 1973. These 57 volunteers provided 514 months of service or 37.8% of the total months of service provided by NOVA volunteers. Services provided by students from UNO to citizens to Nebraska have an estimated value of $257,000. A total of 527 months of service were provided to citizens of Omaha; for the most part these were provided by students of UNO. Most of the volunteers placed at UNO were placed in the city of Omaha.

The University of Nebraska Medical Center placed a total of five volunteers; 3 were placed in August, 1971 and 2 were placed in January, 1972. Students placed from UNMC served three months each. Thus, these five students provided 15 months of service at an estimated value of $7,500. Volunteers placed from UNMC total 1.0% of the total services provided by NOVA.

Faculty Perceptions of NOVA

In May, 1974 questionnaires were circulated to faculty members in the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Home Economics, and in Teachers College at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. These three colleges were selected since volunteers in the NOVA program from the UNL campus had been, almost without exception, from these three colleges.

One out of five faculty members in the three colleges surveyed had an undergraduate advisee who was a NOVA volunteer or had worked with a NOVA volunteer in providing

course or academic credit. Sixty percent of the faculty members surveyed considered themselves to be familiar with NOVA's operations and outcomes. Of those responding to the questionnaire, 81% felt NOVA had been a valuable part of the undergraduate program; 79% felt that other faculty members in their department or college considered NOVA to have been worthwhile. Other findings from this survey include:

1. 91% of the faculty feel that supervised field experiences such as those provided by NOVA are as valuable for student learning as are academic courses offered on campus.
2. 65% of the faculty would oppose the granting of academic credit solely on the basis of completion of a community service or field-based assignment such as those provided for NOVA volunteers.
3. 94% of the faculty favor the granting of credit for experiences such as those provided by NOVA on the basis of a student's completion of a learning contract which specifies both the academic requirements and the performance in the field-based setting.
4. 67% of the faculty feel that experiences similar to those provided by NOVA should be available to students as an alternative to general education requirements.
5. 78% of the faculty feel that academic majors should provide for experiences similar to those provided by NOVA as an alternative to courses offered only within university classrooms.
6. 97% of the faculty would favor granting elective credit for field-based experiences such as those provided by NOVA.

Faculty members were highly positive about the results which they felt had been obtained by NOVA; they were similarly positive about the ways in which educational experiences such as NOVA could be used to provide alternative modes of instruction or learning for students. On the other hand, only one out of three faculty members felt that student interest in learning experiences such as those provided by NOVA was as great at UNL in 1974 as it had been in 1971.

Agency and Volunteer Perceptions About NOVA

Questionnaires circulated to agency personnel which had worked with NOVA volunteers and to NOVA volunteers were identical in format. These questionnaires were completed in May, 1974. Nineteen items on the questionnaire asked the respondent to rate the impact of NOVA on the volunteer, the impact of the volunteer on the agency where he was placed, or the quality of program elements which were required for the volunteer. The scale used for rating each item was defined as follows: 5 = Strongly Agree; 4 = Agree; 3 = Undecided; 2 = Disagree; and 1 = Strongly Disagree. The questionnaire items and the mean of responses obtained from both agency personnel and volunteers are provided below:

Item	Mean Score Volunteers N = 43	Mean Score Agency Personnel N = 31
1. The volunteer was of service to the agency where he was placed.	4.56	4.30
2. The volunteer was of help to citizens served by the agency where he was placed.	4.44	4.20
3. The volunteer provided services which might otherwise have been impossible for the agency to provide.	4.37	3.97
4. The volunteer received adequate supervision and training from the NOVA staff.	3.49	3.03
5. The volunteer received adequate training or supervision from the agency where he was placed.	3.37	3.73
6. The volunteer helped the agency to improve or extend its services to citizens.	4.07	4.10
7. The volunteer was accepted by the community or citizens being served and his contributions were perceived as being valuable.	4.16	4.00
8. The experiences, knowledge, and training gained by the volunteer in his work with the agency were as valuable as the learning which could have been gained in university classes.	4.72	4.53

Item	Mean Score Volunteer N = 43	Mean Score Agency Personnel N = 31
9. During his period of service, the volunteer demonstrated increasing self-confidence.	4.40	4.07
10. During his period of service, the volunteer demonstrated increasing maturity in both thought and action.	4.33	3.73
11. During his period of service, the volunteer demonstrated increased skills in being able to work with people from different walks of life.	4.51	3.93
12. Dring his period of service, the volunteer demonstrated increased skills in being able to plan and organize his use of time and resources.	4.07	3.67
13. During his period of service, the volunteer demonstrated increased skills in identifying and understanding the needs and concerns of other people.	4.37	3.80
14. During his period of service, the volunteer demonstrated an increased awareness of, and ability to handle, his own needs and concerns.	4.09	3.50
15. As a result of his experiences, the volunteer should be better prepared to work with others in any future career role he may choose.	4.58	4.03
16. At the end of his service as a volunteer, the volunteer would have been a good employee for continued service in the role which he had filled.	4.00	3.87
17. The agency had adequate input into the selection of the volunteer before he was placed with the agency.	3.21	3.33
18. The volunteer had adequate input about the agency before he was placed with the agency.	3.51	3.10
19. Both the agency and the volunteer had an adequate understanding of the role and duties to be performed by the volunteer.	3.19	3.20
TOTALS	4.08	3.79

As the data reveal, both volunteers and agency personnel were either undecided or positive about each of the items for which they were asked to provide ratings. Totals would indicate basic agreement with the questionnaire items by both volunteers and agency personnel.

Responses to Basic Questions About NOVA

Six questions appeared on the questionnaires which were sent to agency personnel, to faculty members, and to volunteers. These six questions represent key questions regarding the operation of NOVA and issues of importance in any consideration of programs similar to NOVA. Each of these questions is given; the findings are reported; and, brief comments have been provided as a discussion of each question.

1. *Do you feel the university should continue to offer programs similar to NOVA?*

   In responding to this question, affirmative responses were received from 93% of the faculty; 94% of the agency personnel; and, 100% of the volunteers.

2. *With federal support for the NOVA program ending, do you feel the university should continue to offer programs similar to NOVA by use of university funds?*

   86% of the faculty, 94% of the agency personnel, and 100% of the volunteers indicated that the university should continue to offer the types of learning experiences provided by NOVA.

3. *If a volunteer is to make a significant contribution to a community agency, what do you consider to be the minimum length of time he would need to be in service to the agency?*

   Faculty members tended to believe that experiences similar to those provided by NOVA should extend for a single semester or, at the very most, for two semesters. Volunteers and agency personnel favored a placement range varying from two semesters to an entire calendar year.

   The average NOVA volunteer provided 9.6 months of service. Volunteers placed from UNO averaged 9.0 months of service while volunteers placed from UNL averaged 10.5 months of service. When time spent on

campus in initial or followup training is considered; the average volunteer actually was in service to an agency for a period of time equivalent to two academic semesters.

4. *If programs similar to NOVA were to be continued, do you feel that agencies where students are placed should pay part of the costs involved?*

   One of the suggestions made by UYA for the continued funding of NOVA was that cost-sharing be implemented. The preliminary work with agencies to accomplish cost-sharing was completed. Some agencies were very willing to consider such arrangements. Other agencies were unable to consider such an arrangement because of the nature of their own funding. A third group of agencies were interested in receiving a NOVA placement, or continuing an existing NOVA placement, only if the placement were made without cost to the agency. Agency personnel responding to this question were 53% opposed to paying part of the costs for students placed as volunteers. Only 52% of the volunteers felt that agencies should pay part of the costs of their placement. University faculty, however, were 98% in agreement with agencies being responsible for part of the financial burden of placing volunteers in programs similar to NOVA.

5. *NOVA volunteers received stipends of $190 per month. In addition, they received $50 per month which accumulated during their period of service and was paid to them at the end of the period of service. Thus, the volunteer received in cash payments the equivalent of $240 per month. The volunteer was also a fulltime student and most students do not receive any kind of payment for attendance at school or in learning activities. On the other hand, volunteers were unable—on the basis of both time requirements and federal regulations—to be involved in any part-time work and most students do engage in part-time work to support their attendance at school. Considering all of these factors, what would be the monthly figure, if any, which should be paid to volunteers for fulltime community service work?*

   In all three groups of respondents, the responses

varied across a wide range. The mean response by faculty members was $167 per month; the mean response by volunteers was $226 per month ($14 less than was actually provided in the NOVA program); and, the mean response from agency personnel was $256 per month.

6. *Of the 125 hours which are required as a minimum for graduation from a baccalaureate program, what is the maximum number which you feel students should be able to earn in field-based experiences?*

   Volunteers had a mean response of 25 credit hours; the mean response by agency personnel was 20 credit hours. Faculty members felt that credit should be limited to an average of 19 credit hours for field-based programs.

   All three groups of respondents recommended, on the average, the granting of a lower number of credit hours than had been provided by NOVA. NOVA, in compliance with UYA guidelines which required that volunteers be fulltime students and in compliance with university regulations which define fulltime enrollment as consisting of 12 credit hours per academic semester and 6 credit hours during summer sessions, required volunteers to enroll for 30 academic credit hours during their calendar year of service.

Other Results of NOVA: Movement Toward Institutionalization

In addition to the months of service which were provided by NOVA volunteers while they were receiving stipends, an additional 28 months of service were provided by a total of six people who were placed on a non-stipend basis. The value of these services to citizens of the State of Nebraska is estimated at $14,000. Four of these persons were placed in January, 1974 as a small attempt at a pilot of the types of activities which might be engaged in if NOVA-type programs were offered without the attraction of stipends. One of these students explained at length what involvement in a field-based learning experience while completing academic credits by use of a learning contract had meant to her:

I think it may be of some interest and maybe of some value if I were to say something about myself and how I happened to become a NOVA Volunteer-Student.

I am fory-two years old; married; the mother of four children (the oldest is twenty-three and the youngest, eighteen, graduated this year); and the foster mother of three other children (for their senior year in school). I have always been active in our community, e.g., church, scouts, PTA, etc., but I have always wanted to go to college. Three of our four children were born with congenital defects and while I have always worked, our money was needed to pay medical bills. The January before my fortieth birthday, we were finally financially able for me to attend college on a part-time basis. I enrolled as an Independent Student at Hastings College. I took four hours of Psychology and was granted a scholarship to attend an Interim Study in Alcohol and Drugs in Washington, D.C. and New York City. The cost to attend the private college here [Hasings] was as much for only four hours of credit as was the cost for a semester at the university in Lincoln. It would take forever to finish if I took only four hours a semester; also, I liked my job and needed to work if I were to go to school.

Young people and alcohol-related problems have been a special interest of mine. Lack of education and training have been blocks to opportunities in this field and have caused frustrations and personal feelings of inadequacy.

I learned about NOVA when a NOVA volunteer was assigned to the Probation Office in Hastings. The whole idea sounded too good to be true; it was so "practical" I was sure there had to be a "catch" somewhere—there wasn't and I was on my way. NOVA has not only helped me come this far in my education; it has opened new avenues to an education for me, e.g., CLEP Tests, independent study at the University, Pass-Fail and the possibility of other programs that might be offered by the university [SUN].

NOVA or a program similar to NOVA is one way for someone in a situation similar to mine to be able to

acquire or complete a college education. I sincerely hope the university will instigate a program similar to NOVA to replace the void left by the disappearance of NOVA.

Thank you . . .

The Harding Report has provided numerous quotations from students indicating their high regard for NOVA and the intensity of its impact on them. These types of comments were common throughout NOVA. For brevity, additional comments are not provided here; the reader is referred to the Harding Report.

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Gene Harding, UNL Campus Director during 1971–1972, was a faculty member in Centennial College from 1972–1974. Building from the NOVA concept and his own strong commitment to the effort made by NOVA, Gene and his colleagues in Centennial established volunteer assignments for students. More than 50 students completed a semester or more of volunteer work; the concept of combining volunteer service and academic work was retained and these students earned 6 hours of academic credit for their involvment in volunteer placements. This institutionalization of the NOVA concept, it is anticipated, will continue with an approximate involvement of 25 students per year.

Another project in Centennial College during 1973–1974 provided six hours of academic credit for 12 adults. Eight of these adults are members of the Omaha Indian Reservation at Macy, Nebraska. Staff members from Centennial held weekly seminars in Macy; in addition, these individuals traveled to Lincoln for seminars which were held on campus.

In the Department of Secondary Education, a new course number has been established: Secondary Education 323, Professional Practicum Experiences. Students were encouraged to enroll for credit in this course for field-based or volunteer work other than the practicum experiences gained in student teaching. More than 30 students have made use of this course number since it was inaugurated in 1973. The stimulation for the development of this course came from the NOVA program and from a TTT-sponsored Minority Education project.

The College of Home Economics has instituted a community Service major, which will give students the background to work with low income families, and course work credit for field-based experiences and volunteer work in communities.

Vernon Williams, former director of the Teaching-Learning Center on the UNL campus, and a group of colleagues have been planning a project which they hope to implement. The project calls for approximately two dozen undergraduate students preparing to be teachers to become involved, over the course of their undergraduate years, with a community setting and with students from minority or poverty backgrounds.

Jim Gump, a NOVA volunteer placed in June of 1973, worked with the Institute for Ethnic Studies on the UNL campus. One of his projects was the preparation of a course outline and materials to provide direction for volunteer-related studies. His materials have been submitted to the State University of Nebraska (SUN) Project. SUN is a federally-funded project seeking to establish televised instrucion which would be available to all Nebraskans.

Ed Kelley was instrumental in assisting the Lincoln Public Schools in discussion and preparation of a proposal which was submitted to ACTION. The proposal, which sought planning monies, was aimed at the development and implemetation of a Youth Challenge Program in the Lincoln Public Schools. The Youth Challenge Program is a new program thrust by ACTION directed at the implementation of the UYA or NOVA concept in high school settings. The Lincoln Public Schools have received planning monies and, as of June, 1974, expect to be placing high school students in credit-bearing community volunteer experiences beginning in the fall of 1974.

All of these examples represent ways in which the concept of NOVA is being continued at the University of Nebraska or by other educational institutions in Nebraska. In addition to these items, one other service provided by the NOVA staff was help to Chadron State College in the preparation of their proposal for ACTION funds to initiate a UYA program at Chadron.

The format in which NOVA operated from 1971 to 1974 has ended; the concepts embraced and fostered by NOVA have been integrated into ongoing programs of the university

and have been transplanted to other educational settings, e.g., the Lincoln Public Schools. In this sense, NOVA has been a highly successful program and has met the broad goal stated by President D. B. Varner in a letter to the three campus chancellors (September 6, 1972): "Our real interest in this program from the beginning was not so much to be affiliated with a Washington based agency, but rather to explore some alternatives which might have longer term value for the University."

THE CONCEPT OF EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

Merry Ann Coe

"The university, in the view of many students and professors, is a sanctuary where the interns watch life from their library corner. The curriculum attempts to deal with the problems and possible solutions of poverty, devastation of the environment and the grim dislocation of city dwelling, yet it does not offer the opportunity to confront these realities first hand."(Sturner, 1971)

The concept of experiential education can be defined as a type of educational experience which extends beyond the classical laboratory experience offered in the natural sciences or in the biology laboratory; it goes beyond the special courses designed to provide practical skills in the area of arts and humanities. Such courses and laboratories which teach one not only how to think, but also how to conduct the work of the academic discipline of the profession have long been established in the university setting. The very existence of professional colleges on campus provides evidence that the university has acknowledged, as one of its missions, the training of students at both undergraduate and graduate levels for the rendering of services to the public, while providing a stimulating education.

This concept of off-campus, outside-the-classroom learning is not something new or necessarily innovative in education today. Nor was this concept first discovered through NOVA (Nebraska Opportunity for Volunteers in Action) or the federal University Year in ACTION program. The emphasis on experiential organic development was evident in the wilderness experience and the writings of early settlers, in the open-ended development and community orientation of the land-grant colleges, in the on-the-job-training common in industry, and in the community college movement. American literature, through Whitman, Frost, Hawthorne, and Thoreau, and the

philosophy of Emerson, James, Dewey and Pierce, has probed the significance of personal experience, the need for integration of personalities and of communities, and the urge to complement thought and action (Sturner, 1971).

When Peace Corps and VISTA were formed to allow individuals to serve as volunteers for international and domestic communitites, this gave some educators a chance to build on the concept of community service and the classroom student. Mayor John V. Lindsey initiated the New York City Urban Corps to, "bring together the city and its young people." (Wells, 1971). Local Urban Corps programs provided college students with the opportunity to become *constructively* involved in the community, and to compare first-hand the theories learned in the classroom with the realities of the real world.

Boston High School's "flexible campus" demonstrates secondary educators' commitment to the idea that learning does not just take place in the classroom (Leedom, 1971). Leedom comments: ". . . Now a student wanting to study government can intern for a time in the office of a state representative rather than sit through an entire school course in government. If the student is studying biology, he might spend part of his time training as a lab technician at New England Medical Center. For all this, he gets course credit as well as some career help and counseling from the 'outside' teachers."

The involvement of state colleges and universities with this concept of community service in place of classroom attendence has been described by Goodsell (1973). A survey of state colleges and universities indicated a steadily growing involvement with urban problems, resulting in an increase in specialized academic programs and proliferation of community service projects diversified throughout the urban environment. Of 200 institutions responding to a questionnaire—81%viewed urban involvement as a major or important function. Several years ago, a student internship was described as innovative; during 1972–1973, almost half of the institutions offered internships for credit in community and city agencies.

Some universities also began developing the idea of how they best could serve their surrounding communitites in addition to fielding students in community agencies. Kelly (1973) mentions that the University of Portland in the spring of 1970 offered its services and resources to a local public high school

which, during the school year, was facing a problem of rising racial tension.

Sturner (1971) describes the concept and development of experiential education: "A critical reaction to the traditional focus of education has produced a growing interest in the externship—the deliberate attempt to all students to go off campus to complement their conventional studies with experiential service—learning in the community." He discusses various "town-and-gown" combinations which have been used in higher education for years; overseas study, work-study, social service field work, extra curricular community volunteer work, and off-campus independent study. In 1971, he saw institutions embracing some form of experiential learning, granting credit for such activities, treating off-campus learning on a par with classroom study, and offering programs that allowed students to participate in community service activities.

Learning must be an entire confrontation, a matching of cognitive insights with affective understanding. Without this confrontation with reality, words in books and lectures may become only symbols, never affecting behavior. The university should be concerned with the whole person, who exists in a significant relationship to others and to himself. The university, in short, is an educational broker, concerned with a network of educational resources, both within the classroom and without, both in books and in community learning situations.

Students participating in experiential learning are described as: maturing more rapidly; developing a seriousness of purpose; exhibiting greater self-discipline; and seeing their campus studies in a broader context. Placing the students in direct experiential confrontation with practical social problems may be one of the most effective modes of promoting learning.

The student and the community both profit from externships; the spirit of cooperative social action also stimulates the entire university. It is the off campus service programs that provide an outlet for social consciousness, an experience in which a student can learn to better understand himself while serving others in the community.

Blatchford (1972) mentions: "Students have come in recent years to feel increasingly that education which takes place solely in the classroom suffers from being too removed from society and the problems. The five-year work-study cur-

riculum that Antioch College instituted in 1921 became a prototype of experiential education, allowing students to test out their classroom skills in work situations."

Huber (1972) noted that University Year in ACTION was initiated in response to various recommendations in the Carnegie, Scranton Commission, or Newman reports, and the growing conviction among educators and students that learning outside the classroom needs emphasis. After one year, feedback from agencies with UYA volunteers was very favorable. UYA, Huber states, was sound in concept but would have benefited by a year of planning.

The pressure for instant responses seems to have been the major concern voiced about existing efforts at implementation of experiential or field-based learning alternatives for university students. The concept is valid; to be adequately implemented careful planning before the commencement of a program is a must. NOVA, like Huber's comments regarding UYA, was valuable but suffered from the urgency with which it was initiated. More planning time might have—and probably would have—facilitated the design, operations, and institutionalization of NOVA.

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Some Closing Thoughts

Change occurs with glacial slowness . . .

There is a ubiquitous misconception in our society that change occurs rapidly and easily. Actually, change is slow. Attempts at change are delicate; is is easy to blight or crush attempts at change.

NOVA was an ambitious undertaking. As is so often the case, however, it was easier for people to express a verbal commitment to the concept of NOVA than it was for their subsequent actions to be supportive to the degree that may have been necessary. This indictment, if it can be considered to be such, must be applied to many groups of individuals, e.g.:

1. Students who demanded or suggested that alternative programs be made available. All too often, however, students who investigated NOVA decided not to apply because they would "need to leave my friends," "wouldn't be able to be a committee chairman in my fraternity or sorority," etc.
2. Planners at both UYA and university levels who expected to design, build, and operate a Cadillac program on a Volkswagen budget.
3. Agencies who, on occasion, expected a volunteer to be an instant expert who could solve chronic problems simply by arriving at the agency without cost. There are still people who believe that something can be gained for nothing. . .
4. The almost instant demand for "results" which could be used by the university to improve public relations with the state or with low-income groups and which could be used by UYA in their efforts, as a federal agency, to increase their share of available budget funds.
5. The initial design of NOVA, which removed it from the

ongoing programs of the university, established the concept as being both *different* from and unrelated to other programs.

6. The attempt to operate on too many fronts, e.g., all three campuses, multiple colleges and departments.
7. The failure of UYA guidelines to build volunteer programs on a basis of assessment of needs, planning of objectives, and prescription of time on a basis other than a routine twelve months regardless of the nature of the agency, the characteristics of the need being addressed by the volunteer, or the relationship between the volunteer program and the legitimate concern of faculty regarding academic inputs and standards.

To this observer, from the perspective of three years of involvement in the NOVA program from its inception through its temmination, it was exciting to observe the positive results achieved by NOVA when so many cards were stacked against its success.

NOVA was significant for 141 volunteers who, at a minimum, came face-to-face with some of their own strengths and weaknesses.

NOVA was significant for approximately 250 faculty members who, in responding to the need of a volunteer for academic assignments in a non-traditional format, came face-to-face with the question of what they were teaching, why they were teaching, and the efficacy of how they were teaching.

NOVA was significant for thousands of Nebraska citizens who came into contact with people whose primary concern was to care about the people they worked with. Quite often, the NOVA volunteer was a living example of one of the important elements of citizenship—concern for one's fellow man.

Personally, NOVA was significant because it continually provided unanswered questions and new challenges which tested the limits of time, patience, ability, pain, and pleasure. On balance, it was mostly pleasurable. It failed to achieve many of its intended results; in my opinion, it may have achieved some unintended results which were even more important.

APPENDIX

Faculty supervisors assigned to the NOVA program are identified and their roles and terms of service are given. Agencies served by NOVA are listed and the months of service provided by NOVA volunteers are given on a per agency basis; the reader is reminded that each month of service represents an estimated $500 value in contributed services provided for these community agencies.

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DR. THEODORE ERNST. [UNL] Director, 1972. Professor and Director, Graduate School of Social Work.

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DIANE FERGER. [UNL] Field Supervisor, 1971–1972. Instructor, Food and Nutrition.

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AGENCIES

The community agencies where NOVA volunteers were placed are listed below. The campus from which the volunteer was placed is identified; the agency name and address are provided; and the months of service provided to the agency by one or more NOVA volunteers is given. The fifteen agencies which received the largest number of volunteer months of service from the NOVA program are marked with an asterisk.

Campus of Placement	*Agency*	*Months of Service*
UNL	Adams County Courthouse Probation Program 5th and St. Joseph Hastings, Nebraska 68901	9
UNL	Alcohol Project Municipal Court 920 "O" Street Lincoln, Nebraska 68508	3
UNL	*Alliance City Schools Community Indian Guidance Center 100 West 14th Alliance, Nebraska	74
UNO	American Indian Center 2224 Leavenworth Street Omaha, Nebraska 68102	15
UNO	Blair Ministerial Alliance 2078 Colfax Blair, Nebraska 68108	12
UNL	Center for Rural Affairs P.O. Box 10 Walthill, Nebraska 68067	12
UNL	Chadron State College Student Services Project 10th and Main Street Chadron, Nebraska 69337	22

UNO	*Chicano Awareness Center 2401 South 20th Street Omaha, Nebraska 68108	40
UNO	Christ Child Center 128 South 10th Street Omaha, Nebraska 68101	12
UNO	Citizen's Corps Housing Committee 8073 Arbor Omaha, Nebraska 68131	4
UNL	*Commission on Christian Concern 1309 West Third North Platte, Nebraska 69101	53
UNL	*Cooperative School Project Parent Involvement Program Clinton School 1520 North 29th Street Lincoln, Nebraska 69503	31
UNL	Division of Rehabilitation Services for the Visually Impaired 1047 South Street Lincoln, Nebraska	3
UNO	Eastern Nebraska Community Office of Retardation (ENCOR) 116 South 42nd Street Omaha, Nebraska 69131	11
UNL	Educational Service Unit #8 203 South 6th Norfolk, Nebraska 68701	9
UNL	Gage County Courthouse Probation Office Beatrice, Nebraska	21
UNL	Golden Hills Community Action Agency Walthill, Nebraska	6
UNO	*Greater Omaha Area Lutheran (GOAL) 124 South 24th Street Omaha, Nebraska 68102	54
UNO	Greater Omaha Association for Retarded Children (GORAC)	

	116 South 42nd Street Omaha, Nebraska 68131	15
UNO	*Greater Omaha Community Action (GOCA) East Omaha Teen Center 1901 East Locust Omaha, Nebraska 69110	42
UNL	Headstart/Lincoln Public Schools Clinton Elementary School 1520 North 29th Street Lincoln, Nebraska 69503	9
UNL	Home Economics Extension Box 429 North Platte, Nebraska 69101	24
UNL	Institute for Ethnic Studies University of Nebraska Oldfather Hall #1215 Lincoln, Nebraska 68508	12
UNO	*Kellom Girls Club 2302½ Charles Omaha, Nebraska 68110	45
UNL	Lancaster County Extension Service Inner City 4-H 308 Federal Courthouse Lincoln, Nebraska 68508	12
UNL	*Lancaster Office of Mental Retardation (LOMR) 2202 South 11th Street Lincoln, Nebraska	32
UNL	League of Human Dignity 1432 "N" Street Lincoln, Nebraska 68508	12
UNL	League of Women Voters 1614 "N" Street Lincoln, Nebraska 69508	12
UNL	Legal Aid Society of Lincoln 800 Anderson Building Lincoln, Nebraska 60508	22
UNO	Legal Aid Society of Onaha 3024 North 62nd Street Omaha, Nebraska 68110	12

UNL	Lincoln Action Program 1928 "S" Street Lincoln, Nebraska	18
UNL	Lincoln Council on Alcoholism and Drugs, Inc. 215 Centennial Mall South Lincoln, Nebraska 60508	17
UNL	Lincoln 4-C 1210 No. 37th Lincoln, Nebraska 60503	12
UNL	Lincoln Individual Needs Learning Center Lincoln Public Schools 40th and Adams Lincoln, Nebraska 68503	11
UNL	Lincoln-Lancaster Child Guidance Center 215 Centennial Mall South Lincoln, Nebraska 68508	12
UNL	Lincoln-Lancaster Mental Health Clinic Adult Day Center 2145 So. 13th Street Lincoln, Nebraska 68502	11
UNL	Lincoln Public Schools Neighborhood Youth Corps(NYC) Lincoln High School Rm. #103 Lincoln, Nebraska	12
UNL	Lincoln Regional Center Folsom & Van Dorn P.O. Box 80499 Lincoln, Nebraska 68501	9
UNL	Lincoln Regional Center Morton School Lincoln, Nebraska 68501	24
UNO	Madonna School 1537 North 62nd Street Omaha, Nebraska 68104	18
UNL	Malone Community Center Headstart Day Care 2030 "T" Street Lincoln, Nebraska 68502	28

UNL	Mexican American and Indian Health Clinic Omaha, Nebraska	10
UNL	*Municipal Court Volunteer Program 920 "O" Street Lincoln, Nebraska 68508	48
UNO	Native American Home Base 33rd and California Omaha, Nebraska 68131	3
UNL	Nebraska Commission on Aging Grand Generation 300 South 17th Street Lincoln, Nebraska 68508	12
UNL	Nebraska Indian Inter-Tribal Development Corporation Box *238 Winnebago, Nebraska 68071	17
UNO	Nebraska Psychiatric Institute (NPI) 602 South 44th Avenue Omaha, Nebraska	4
UNL	Niobrara and Santee Housing Authority Niobrara, Nebraska	12
UNL	North Platte Experiment Station Box 429 North Platte, Nebraska 69101	12
UNL	Northeast Technical Community College 801 E. Benjamin Avenue Norfolk, Nebraska 68701	12
UNL	Northwest Nebraska Community Action Council 234 Main P.O. Box 746 Chadron, Nebraska	24
UNO	*Omaha Welfare Rights Council 2016 Cass Street Omaha, Nebraska 68102	48
UNO	Planned Parenthood	

	4155 Dewey Street Omaha, Nebraska 68105	20
UNL	Platte Valley Community Action, Inc. 610 East 4th P.O. Box 1288 Grand Island, Nebraska 68801	24
UNO	Project Embrace 1001North 30th Street Omaha, Nebraska 68131	12
UNO	Project Equality of Nebraska 124 South 24th Street Suite 208 Omaha, Nebraska 68110	12
UNO	Richard Young Hospital 515 Scouth 26th Omaha, Nebraska	3
UNO	Sacred Heart School 2123 Binney Street Omaha, Nebraska	21
UNL	*Santee Community Action Program Santee Tribal Council R.R. *2 Niobrara, Nebraska 68760	48
UNL	Scottsbluff County Office of Mental Retardation Route *1 Box 11 Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69361	20
UNL	Scottsbluff County Office of Probation Gering, Nebraska	5
UNL	State Wide Housing Coalition 1928 "S" Street Lincoln, Nebraska	12
UNO	Tenant Coordinating Council 2931 "Q" Street Omaha, Nebraska 68107	24
UNO	Urban Action Association Day Care 3701 North 24th Street Omaha, Nebraska 68110	9

UNO	*Urban League of Nebraska Prison Project 515 Karbach Building Omaha, Nebraska 68102	33
UNL	Volunteer Service Bureau Office of Student Activities Suite 200—Nebraska Union University of Nebraska Lincoln, Nebraska 68508	7
UNO	Wesley House United Methodist Community Center 2001 North 35th Street Omaha, Nebraska 68111	8
UNO	Woodson Center 3009 "R" Street Omaha, Nebraska	6
UNO	*Y.O.U.T.H. (Indian Youth Center) 528 North 33rd Street Omaha, Nebraska 68111	31
UNL	*Y.W.C.A. 1432 "N" Street Lincoln, Nebraska 68508	38